

By [Misha Savic](#)

July 20, 2023 at 2:56 AM EDT

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NATO-led peacekeepers should exert more influence in Kosovo to prevent further unrest after recent clashes between protesters and security forces left dozens injured, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said.

“The only institution that works toward preserving peace and security in Kosovo is KFOR,” Vucic told reporters in Brussels late Wednesday after talks with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, referring to the force. “I asked for a more significant KFOR role in easing the tensions.”

KFOR has already added around 500 soldiers to boost its Balkan mission to more than 4,500 after the violence, in which local Serbs defied the ethnic-Albanian authorities attempt to install mayors in four northern municipalities in May. Dozens of protesters, NATO troops and police were injured.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization has maintained its presence in Kosovo since a 1998-1999 war between Serbs and ethnic Albanians, which ended when a NATO bombing campaign drove Serbian troops across the border.

Kosovo unilaterally declared independence in 2008, which Serbia doesn't recognize. European Union-facilitated negotiations have made little progress in more than a decade of mediation between the wartime foes. Both Serbia and Kosovo need to mend ties to qualify for possible membership in the bloc.

“We strongly believe that the only path forward is to engage in the EU-facilitated dialog,” Stoltenberg said before meeting Vucic. “Serbia is a long-standing partner of NATO, and we trust that you will engage in this dialog in a constructive way.”

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Politics

Senate Voting on Bill to Avert US Government Shutdown

- McCarthy defies Republican hardliners but gets Democrat votes
- Ukraine aid set aside for now, White House sees separate bill





Kevin McCarthy speaks to reporters at the US Capitol on Saturday. *Photographer: Anna Rose Layden/Bloomberg*

By [Erik Wasson](#), [Jonathan Tamari](#), [Maeve Sheehey](#), and [Steven T. Dennis](#)
September 30, 2023 at 8:54 AM EDT
Updated on September 30, 2023 at 8:11 PM EDT

Congress is on track to avoid a federal government shutdown with the Senate preparing to vote on a bipartisan, short-term spending measure with just hours left

The proposal would keep the US government open until Nov. 17 and has \$16 billion in disaster funding – but does not include aid for Ukraine, a key priority for President Joe Biden and lawmakers in both parties.

“Democrats and Republicans have come to agreement and the government will remain open,” Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said before the vote. “We will have avoided a shutdown.”



Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer at the US Capitol on Sept. 28, 2023. *Photographer: Nathan Howard/Bloomberg*

The proposal from Republican Speaker Kevin McCarthy is before the Senate after passing the House earlier Saturday in a dramatic vote that saw him rely on Democratic votes to secure passage. The House vote was 335-91, with 209 Democrats voting with 126 Republicans to support the measure.

A Senate vote could happen before or shortly after midnight provided there are no procedural hurdles.

“There is growing hope that we may actually avoid a shutdown,” said Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell.

A White House official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the House-passed bill would keep the government open at higher levels than the Senate’s version, noting it includes disaster relief and authorization for the Federal Aviation Administration, which expires Oct. 1.

[Link to BGOV Bill Summary: H.R. 5860, Stopgap Funding Through Nov. 17](#) □□



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Federal agencies in recent days had begun planning for a shutdown with Congress deadlocked. Even a short-term shutdown would see many federal employees furloughed and others forced to continue working without pay as agencies halted many of their services. A prolonged shutdown, though, would pose deeper threats to the economy, potentially jeopardizing hopes for a soft landing and coming with financial markets already anxious over high interest rates and US voters worried about the economy.

Ukraine Aid

The lack of Ukraine aid presents a new challenge for the White House and lawmakers who back continued assistance to Kyiv. The Biden administration, the White House official said, expects Ukraine aid to be handled in another bill.

Democratic New Hampshire Senator Jeanne Shaheen told reporters the upper chamber would work on a Ukraine supplemental aid package in the coming weeks.

“Every day that goes by without this aid Russia gets closer to being capable to winning this war,” said Democratic Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut.

A Senate bill with funding for Ukraine had strong bipartisan support before the latest House maneuver. But McConnell, one of the strongest advocates for Kyiv, said Republicans there would block a vote on their chamber’s bill to let the House do its work. McCarthy has told Republicans that Ukraine can withstand 45 days without new US aid.

Read more: [House Omits Ukraine Funding for Now in Measure to Avert Shutdown](#)

Hardliner Mutiny

McCarthy defied hardliners in his own party with his proposal, which the speaker’s allies rushed to fast-track using a procedure that relied heavily on Democratic votes.

The bill threatens to provoke hardliner Matt Gaetz, McCarthy's most ardent detractor, to move to oust the speaker. The House adjourned until Monday, preventing Gaetz from offering a so-called motion to vacate immediately after the bill.

"If somebody wants to remove me because I want to be the adult in the room, go ahead and try," McCarthy told reporters earlier Saturday.

The measure doesn't include ultra-conservatives' demands for deep spending cuts and border policies anathema to Democrats.

"I want to keep government open while we finish our job to secure the border," McCarthy told reporters after a closed-door GOP meeting that lasted an hour and a half.

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North Carolina Representative Greg Murphy emerged from the meeting saying some Republicans have a "pathological" dislike of McCarthy.

"They're not willing to put that aside and do what's best for the country," Murphy said of the hardliners. "It's pretty selfish, to be honest."

Read more: [The Shutdown Seven: Here Are Lawmakers to Watch in Negotiations](#)
– *With assistance by Billy House and Akayla Gardner*

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McCarthy Faces Attempt by Far Right to Remove Him as Speaker

- His compromise with Democrats on funding touches off revolt
- Gaetz said he'll file a motion to vacate speakership this week





Kevin McCarthy in Washington, DC, US, on Sept. 30. *Photographer: Anna Rose Layden/Bloomberg*

By [Billy House](#)

October 1, 2023 at 9:05 AM EDT

Updated on October 1, 2023 at 9:27 AM EDT

[Listen 2:51](#)

Kevin McCarthy's embrace of a bipartisan deal to avert a US government shutdown has triggered a mutiny by far-right Republicans to depose him as House speaker.

Florida Republican Matt Gaetz said on Sunday that he will file a motion to vacate the chair this week, seizing on a parliamentary process that has not resulted in a speaker removal vote since 1910.

"I do intend to file a motion to vacate against Speaker McCarthy this week," Gaetz said on CNN's "State of the Union". "I think we need to rip off the Band-Aid. I think we need to move on with new leadership that can be trustworthy."



Representative Matt Gaetz, arrives at the US Capitol on Sept. 30. *Photographer: Anna Rose Layden/Bloomberg*

Gaetz's announcement came just hours after the House and Senate passed a temporary spending bill that attracted support from both sides.

Gaetz said his move stemmed from McCarthy's embrace of a bipartisan deal that didn't enact the steep spending cuts ultra-conservatives have demanded. That, he has said, is the latest in a string of promises McCarthy made to be elected speaker and has since broken.

"This isn't personal. This is about spending," Gaetz said. "This is about the deal Kevin McCarthy made."

McCarthy needs only a simple majority of all House members voting to stop the effort to remove him. Republicans hold a slim majority and just five could join unified Democrats to bounce McCarthy from the speaker's office.

Representative Byron Donalds, a Republican from Florida who opposed the stopgap spending measure, said he thinks McCarthy's in trouble.

“I’m going to be totally blunt. There are a lot of trust issues in my chamber right now,” Donalds said on “Fox News Sunday.”

Previously, some House Democrats have said any effort to save McCarthy from a hardliner revolt would be contingent on bipartisan compromises.

Even if McCarthy survives the current mutiny, Republican dissenters could call for a new vote at any time or impose procedural hurdles to block consideration of legislation. That essentially requires him to either maintain the alliance with Democrats—essentially a coalition government in the House—or resolve differences with hardliners who now have one more reason to resent his leadership.

In 2015, then-Speaker John Boehner resigned when hardliners threatened such a rebellion rather than rely on Democratic votes to remain in power.

House Democrats led by Representative Hakeem Jeffries of New York could decide to bail out McCarthy, even if they don’t actually cast votes to keep him in his post. Enough members could simply not show up, hold back their votes, or merely vote “present,” lowering the threshold number of “nays” to removal that McCarthy needs to prevail.

Representative Dean Phillips of Minnesota has said he and other Democrats would consider helping out McCarthy out. But he reeled back those comments after the speaker authorized formal impeachment inquiry of President Joe Biden, which Phillips considered an act of “pandering” to the Republican hard right. Still, it’s not too late for McCarthy to win back that potential support, Phillips and others say.

Jeffries has said not even been contemplating the idea of aiding McCarthy. “We’ll just have to cross that bridge, if and when we get to it,” he said.

– *With assistance by Alicia Diaz*

(Updates with new detail starting in fourth paragraph)

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